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[12 cont.]

[Shamanism Among the Indians of Tropical South America], I, p. 203.

Apinagé [Apinaye] shamans are designated "by the soul of some close relative who puts them in communication with the world of the spirits, from whom they obtain their medical science." (5)

5. Métraux. Op. cit., I, 203.

Hubert and Mauss, referring to this same matter, state the following: "Magic virtue is acquired by revelation in the majority of Australian tribes. Normally, this revelation is produced in the course of a dream or in an ecstatic or semiecstatic state. This revelation is generally the work of spirits, spirits of the dead, pure spirits, and probably very frequently the work of spirits less clearly classified, whose qualities are not defined and whose mythical figure floats between the shades of mankind, the animal, and the divinity of nature (6)." And with respect to revelation

6. Origen de los poderes mágicos en las sociedades australianas [Origin of Magic Powers in Australian Societies] by Hubert and Mauss, III, 235.

they tell us again: "It is possible and even probable that the theme of the revelation by the spirits of the dead is at least confounded in one and the same complex myth with the theme of the revelation by pure spirits." (7)

7. Ibid. [13]

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2) This spirit reveals its presence by means of a sudden illness, as we have just seen in previously mentioned incidents, or by other variable symptoms, but they are usually actual hysterical attacks, in which the spirit manifests itself by strong convulsions and by loss of consciousness to signify it has entered into possession of the person destined to become a shaman.

[123 cont.]

796 aspects: 1) it shows ability in theatrical representations; 2) dancing, such as we have described in previous paragraphs, accompanied by songs; 3) a very interesting sexual aspect, in which the cultural patterns which govern Guajiro society are [786] broken, permitting the possibility of a certain sexual freedom without the consequences attached to such in normal times. We will begin with this last aspect, leaving for later a discussion of what their songs, plays, or drama really are.

Sexual aspect. a) The man, when the moment for dancing 796 arrives, takes a partner who usually accompanies him on every 786 evening of the dance. When they end by liking each other, as a result of dancing together, the couples leave the dancing group and withdraw to the forest to satisfy their sexual desires.

In normal times in the community this act would lead to 684 outbreaks of fighting in which the clans of the two participants 628 would clash. The man would be summoned and would be under an obligation to pay a large sum for the harm done and a further sum for the dangers and pains of childbirth in case of pregnancy; or he would find himself obliged to buy the woman for wife in reparation for the fault he had committed. In case he failed to comply with one of these requirements, vengeance and war would follow. But none of this happens during this time of fiesta. 796 If a man who has been with a woman during these nights of 786 dancing (which can go on for three or four months) cares to take her as his wife, he must pay for her the price arranged with her relatives, but if he does not want to do this, his total obligation [731] is limited to a present of a robe. She on her part will give him a similar gift or simply a belt for his loincloth. Afterward they do not meet each other except on casual occasions.

Furthermore, if, owing to intimacies during the dance between unmarried couples, a child should be born, the father has [848] no responsibility toward it or to the girl's relatives. The child is accepted by the girl's family; it is not looked down on, and it participates under conditions of equality with the legitimate heirs in all the duties and rights of the other members of the family group.

[127 cont.]
representation of the re-creation of the universe, the resurgence of nature that changes and disappears, to reappear later.

In large part, this could explain the whole of the fiesta. In reality what in La Guajira is being celebrated under the name of the Dance of the Kid is nothing but a true re-creation of the world of the natives of those barren plains. With the arrival of the rains the sea of sand is converted into a green world, the dry beds of the streams become powerful streams of water, the dry brushwood is transformed into green forest, anxiety over thirst disappears, fatigue from sun and desert is changed to rest, hunger to abundance, and worry to hope in the ripening of fruits and the disappearance of the specter of poverty which prowls the sierras and the plains. It is Mareiwa, their divinity, their good spirit, who has made his apparition over the lakes of the Sierra de Nevada, unleashing storms and hurricanes and bringing the promised rains to his creatures.

But, on the other hand, the sexual acts we have just shown to be present at this traditional fiesta of La Guajira should be treated apart as they represent a transgression of the established rigid and severe cultural patterns that refer to carnal relations between men and women. As the general interpretation of the whole of the Guajiro community has not yet been finished, which could give us sufficient data to carry out necessary clarifications, we shall have to limit ourselves to noting certain outstanding facts.

Unmarried men and women in La Guajira, when looked at in its normal state, are subject to rigorous restrictions in their sex life. Sexual intercourse before marriage is not allowed to their women as the men want their spouses to be virgin. The bachelor is limited in the satisfaction of his sexual impulses by the law of compensation payment, which forces him in the case of his having relations with an unmarried girl to pay a heavy indemnity by which is covered the harm done to the woman, the offense [128] to her relatives, and the possible pains and dangers of childbirth when pregnancy occurs. And if these impositions are not complied with or if the Indian does not marry the girl, paying the price her relatives demand, revenge and declaration

[128 cont.]
of war to the death will result between the clans affected.

One has to take into account the fact that a woman who has been bought for wife is relatively valuable, and the native is not always in a position to accumulate the number of animals sufficient to pay for her, although it is considered an obligation on the part of his relatives to assist him when the time for his marriage arrives. As prostitution is so limited because of the condition of inferiority in which it places the woman who traffics in sex, the situation of the unmarried male in this respect is difficult. We repeat again that we make this statement on the basis of the facts of La Guajira social customs in normal times, and not on the basis of the present period when they are suffering from ever increasing problems of hunger, poverty, and acculturation, phenomena which are overthrowing all their traditional institutions.

Presenting the question in these terms, one can appreciate the trying position of the bachelor Guajiro native who is without slaves and without economic resources to enable him to buy a wife. He lives within a regimen of limitations and restrictions which reach even to sexual taboos which can be divided into two classes: special cases, especially applicable to the sex life of shamans, as we have seen; and general cases, applicable to the whole community and which go to the extreme of provoking curious euphemisms in the language when the word for the genital organ is phonetically similar to some other word, as in the case with the word for dog.

These restrictions must be considered in the totality of the social norms, but this is not the moment to expound on them as they will be fully covered in this review as an interpretation of the whole of Guajiro society. However, we wish to point out their presence in the Dance of the Kid, or better said their absence, since, as we have said, these restrictions disappear, and there is complete sexual freedom which permits the minstrel to caress the young maids on the pretext of deciding their virginity or loss of it, a thing that in normal times would not be permitted, and to go to the extreme of countenancing carnal union without economic or social consequences, the only

[128 cont.]

796 requirement being the girl's consent; and she, in spite of the
786 loss of her virginity, in spite of her illegal maternity, does not descend in status nor bring into her community a new being inferior in standing in any way to the others. [129]

This in large part explains the large attendance of youths of both sexes at the ceremony of the Dance of the Kid, which pleases the patron who sponsors the rite because it gives a greater solemnity to the rite and in that way aids in the propitiation of the rains, and, in consequence, the harvests will be of good quality and more abundant.

d) A proof that these ceremonies break away from the
535 sexual order established in the community is the frequent rep-
524 resentation of the sexual act of animals combined with other
796 dramatizations which we shall study later. Here are some exam-
831 ples.

The hawksbill turtle. Participants arrange themselves in a long line, or chain, firmly clasping each others' waists. They symbolize in this manner the sexual act of the hawksbill turtle. This line belongs to one singer who says in his song that his turtles are performing their sexual act as they are in heat. Another band is also headed by its singer. Their role consists in trying to separate the turtles, by tugging, each one separately, at the chain made by the turtles. The turtle that is separated from its team is taken over as a trophy by the other team, but if this group is unable to pull them away it loses the match. The activity lasts until all the turtles of the chain have been separated from their team or until the opposite band that is attempting to do this declares itself beaten.

The kid. This game is played on a cleared field. A group
526 of Indians holding each others' hands form a circle, making be-
535 lieve it is a corral in which female goats are kept at night. Out-
831 side the corral are the male goats represented by other Indians
796 who, in full view of the animals enclosed, march round the corral and make successive attempts to enter. The Indians who represent the fence fend them off but finally one or two males are able to force their way in. Once inside, they imitate and copy all the attitudes of the male when aroused; they chase the females, pursue and smell them, and end by simulating the sexual act. At

[129 cont'd]

526 this moment the owner of the goats arrives to look over his flock,
535 and he states in his song that none of his animals are missing,
796 they are fat because pasture is fresh and abundant, and he an-
831 nounces that he is about to mark them. He starts by taking out
each female goat one by one and pretends to cut its ear, which
[429] is the way to mark such animals. He keeps up his song, referring
to what he is doing. "I have many goats and now I shall lack
neither meat nor milk; I am rich...."

e) We would add to the above the fact that Indian girls of
[554] the wealthy class do not take part in these gatherings, or they
796 do so on very rare occasions, as their prestige [130] would
786 diminish seriously in consequence of the opinion held of the fiesta
that only those girls go to it who want to get a husband readily
or to satisfy their sexual urges. Besides, it is the obligation of
each man to flirt with or treat with familiarity the girl who be-
comes his partner in the dance, and her obligation is to supply
him during the dance with roasted corn, bread, meat, chicha, etc.

Summarizing up to this point, we can state that the Dance of the Kid is a festival in which the Guajiro Indians seek to propitiate the rains at the same time that it celebrates their arrival and fecundity: fecundity in fruits; fecundity in animals, as dramatized in the ceremonies just described; and fecundity among men, in human beings, who are free from the restrictions which are imposed on them by the community in ordinary daily life to maintain social order.

• • •

536 Theatrical representations. "Drama is particularly difficult to classify because so often it gets mixed up with religion.... On the other hand, dramatic scenes can be executed for collective entertainment or as farces with no special pretentions, as for example in a Tahitian pantomime which represents the theft of a basket of food from a sleeping servant; although it can occur, on occasion, that these simple and uncertain experiments develop into real dramas." (65)

65. Lowie. Antropología Cultural [Cultural Anthropology], XI, 194-195.

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the first wife retains a privileged position. She will be of the best family and the highest in rank. She is the hostess.

One day, when I was standing talking with Mauana, he pointed to a couple walking past and said eagerly:

'You should picture those with your apparatus.'

I photographed the two, who to me appeared very ordinary. The woman had her cheeks and nose painted red. Mauana whispered to me that the woman was not a woman, but that they were two men living together. Later we came across several Indian men who did women's work and wore women's dress. This was not considered really right, but it was looked upon with indulgence. In the early days of discovery gold coins were found on the coast by Santa Marta which depicted 'shameful acts contrary to Nature'. Among the Guajiros' relatives in the West Indies there were chiefs who had whole harems of boys.

'We were talking of bride-price and buying women slaves,' said I, to revert to more normal things. 'What does a poor youth do, who possesses nothing?'

Everyone agreed that it was a pity about any such. The law had definite regulations for intercourse between man and woman, and any infringement involved a claim for damages. If anyone seduced a woman, he must pay considerable compensation to her relatives, however willing she may have been; but if he took her against her will, it costs him considerably more. A poor man cannot pay and therefore risks losing his life as a punishment. The Indians admitted that here and there on the border there was prostitution, but it was mostly mestizo women who lent themselves to that. In Guajira proper, there were no prostitutes. Both the chiefs and the monks told us that. Thus in the interior, a young man without means must live a life of abstinence. The time when the dances of the kid were performed would be his only opportunity of enjoying a woman's favours, provided he could find a willing partner. At this time the otherwise strict code is suspended and free love permitted.

Mauana had promised to arrange a dance, but of another kind. The dances of the kid are performed during the rainy

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796 great ring and several of them were wiping their mouths in evident satisfaction—presumably having just been regaled with some drink.

796 The drum thundered a long time in vain before a young 535 Indian stepped into the ring, removed his cloak and sandals and began to walk round in a circle—a challenge to the members of the fair sex.

Almost at once a girl appeared in the ring; removed her sandals and held her tunic spread wide with her hands. The two then began dancing: he in front, she a few yards behind. Suddenly the man gave a shout and the tempo increased. Turning swiftly the girl came sweeping down towards the man who danced away, moving backwards. She must try to get close enough to tramp on his feet and make him fall, but she must not barge him. If she managed to make her partner fall, there was great jubilation, and then a new couple took the stage. Otherwise, the girl would probably challenge her partner to a few more turns, while he answered contemptuously:

'Fetch your little sister.' (Inferring that she would manage better.)

In this way a dance continues without interruption, couple following couple. It could go on for weeks.

The well-bred Indian considers the chichamaya the only suitable dance. The monks also approved of it, since it was perfectly decent, the two dancers remaining apart the whole [117] time. The dance is not genuinely Indian, containing both Spanish and African features, but even in its present form it retains its religious-magical significance and is part of the ritual used in certain family ceremonies and on other important occasions.

796 The dance of the kid is a pure folk dance. It is really a 786 whole complex of games, dances and typical fertility rites. The good families do not allow their daughters to attend them. The law's strict sexual prohibition does not apply to those taking part in the dance of the kid, who enjoy an [585 otherwise forbidden erotic licence. This is not approved of 184] by the well-to-do, who still hold by the rule that a bride should be a virgin, since it can have an effect on the bride-price.

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price. Thus the well-to-do send slaves or servants to the dances.

These dances also have a practical significance. They take place at the start of the rains when vegetation shoots up and help is needed in keeping weeds under. Those taking part in the dance must weed their host's ground during the day, as a return for their food and the dancing at night. They have to do something during the feast which lasts for weeks at a time. Naturally holding such a dance-feast is a costly business, but as a compensation the giver has work done for him. Therefore the feast moves from rancho to rancho, while there is work to be done.

Actually all the dancers ought to be at home working during this time, for all plantations will become overgrown if they are neglected, but the young people are tempted by the feast, the dancing and love-making, and the opportunity to get free of the bonds of strict convention for a time. The fertility of the crops is promoted by different erotic performances, although the Indians no longer seem fully aware that this is their significance. These are typical magical fertility rites.

The actual dance of the kid is performed in different ways. Sometimes the couples are in lines one behind the other, the men holding the girl in front round the waist. First they all dance forwards, and then they turn. At each turn they change partners, the men singing: 'Lend me your partner for my travelling companion.' Another way of performing the dance is very like a long-dance in Sweden. Each group of dancers is led by a singer who always improvises his song, so that the words are always new.

The dance begins at sunset and continues for several hours, after which the dancers all make off into the darkness, two by two, and spend the night with each other. Usually a couple will stick together throughout the feast. Intercourse must be of the girl's own free will, but involves the man in no obligations, neither compensation for her lost virginity nor damages if a child should result. This is recognized by the girl's family, because it is a result of the freedom allowed during the dance of the kid. If, after the feast, a man wishes

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to marry his partner, he must pay for her in the normal way. Otherwise the young men and girls just give each other mementoes.

One of the games forming part of the dance of the kid is the so-called virginity test. The girls gather round a singer who improvises a variation of the theme: 'Let us see, pretty maid, if you have kept your innocence, if any man's hands have touched your body.' He then runs his hands over each girl in turn from the tip of her big toe, over her leg, knee, crotch, belly, chest and neck to the crown of her head, all the while trying to tickle her. Whoever neither laughs nor moves is declared a virgin and lauded by the singer. She goes and stands on one side, while those who cannot keep from laughing and so are not virgins, go to the other. Afterwards pretence presents are given to the 'virgins'.

When young people are gathered together as during the dance of the kid festival, all sorts of dance-games and pantomimes are performed. Some are connected with fertility rites, as those imitating the mating-play of turtles and goats. In the latter, the girl 'goats' are enclosed in a ring of men who try to prevent the male 'goats' from getting inside it. If any of the youths manage to leap in, they behave exactly like billy goats, pursuing the 'nannies', nosing at them and pretending to mount them. A number of the games have no erotic connection, but refer to all sorts of events in the lives of men and animals. Animals are imitated most faithfully.

One of the games depicts a meeting between the lowlanders and highlanders of Guajira. Each of the two sides has a singing leader. They exchange greetings and then each describes the situation in their homes: in the one plenty of rain, good harvests, plenty to eat and fat cattle; in the other drought, starvation and misery.

Those who are lucky with their climate then invite the others to their territory, and they all dance off in the same direction. The game is a reference to the fact that the lowlanders have the right against payment to send their herds to upper Guajira at certain times of the year to graze.